

Bridgnorth
Rural District Council



REPORT

— OF THE —

Medical Officer of Health



FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st December, 1948.

Bridgnorth Rural District Council

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Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1948.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BRIDGNORTH
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report for the year
ended 31st December, 1948.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

L. E. DICKSON, M.D.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

Medical Officer of Health :

L. E. DICKSON, M.D.

Sanitary Inspector :

S. J. YELLAND, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A., A.R.I.C.S.
(until 1/7/48)

D. NEWMAN, Cert.S.I.B. (from 1/7/48 to 31/12/48).

SECTION "A."

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area in Acres, 101,040.

Registrar-General's estimate of the Resident population at mid-1948, 12,940.

Rateable Value, £56,465.

Number of inhabited houses at the end of 1948—3,500.

Sum represented by a penny rate—£237 14s. 5d.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Total.	Males.	Females
LIVE BIRTHS	212	111	101
Legitimate	205	108	97
Illegitimate	7	3	4
STILL BIRTHS	6	3	3
Legitimate	6	3	3
Illegitimate	—	—	—
DEATHS	126	66	60

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated resident population, 16.2

RATE per 1,000 total live and still births, 27.5.

DEATH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated resident population, 9.7

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES :

Puerperal Sepsis, Nil.

INFANT MORTALITY :

Deaths of Infants under one year of age :

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Legitimate	9	4	5
Illegitimate	—	—	—

DEATH RATES :

All infants per 1,000 live births, 42.4.

Legitimate per 1,000 legitimate live births, 43.9.

Illegitimate per 1,000 illegitimate live births, Nil.

DEATHS FROM :

	Male.	Female.
Measles	1	—
Whooping Cough	—	—
Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	—	1
Cancer	8	10

SECTION "B."

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS as in Section A.

LABORATORY FACILITIES are provided at the Royal Salop Infirmary.

NURSING IN THE HOME is under the control of the Local Health Authority, i.e., Salop County Council.

AMBULANCE SERVICES.—On 1st April, 1948, the Bridgnorth Borough Ambulance was taken over by the County Council and continues to operate from Bridgnorth for short distance journeys. Telephone 2303.

Long distance journeys are arranged with the Headquarters of the Ambulance Service. Telephone Shrewsbury 2626.

HOSPITALS. — There is no Hospital in Bridgnorth Rural District. The area is in the main served by the Bridgnorth and South Shropshire Infirmary, Innage House (formerly Bridgnorth Public Assistance Institution), the Wolverhampton group of hospitals and the Shrewsbury hospitals.

Orthopædic patients are treated in the Orthopædic Hospital at Oswestry, or when more convenient, at Wolverhampton.

Cases of infectious disease needing isolation were, until 5th July, 1948, accepted at Monkmoor Isolation Hospital, Shrewsbury. In future they will be accepted at Wolverhampton Isolation Hospital or if accommodation is not available there, it will be arranged through the Hospital Bed Bureau.

VENEREAL DISEASE.—There are clinics for these diseases at Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton and Kidderminster.

WELFARE.—At the Bridgnorth Welfare Centre there are clinics for children, orthopædic patients, and ante-natal services.

SECTION "C."

WATER SUPPLIES.

COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME.

- (1) **High Level Scheme.**—During the year a meeting between the Bridgnorth and Ludlow Rural District Councils, convened by the Salop County Council, was held to consider a number of questions relating to the proposed Joint High Level Scheme.

It was finally resolved that the advice of the Consulting Engineer should be accepted, and instructions were given to prepare the scheme. It is anticipated that details will be ready for submission to the Ministry of Health early next year.

- (2) **Low Level Scheme.**—Little progress has been made during the current year. Further information is required by the Minister of Health and some considerable time is likely to elapse before all the necessary data can be collected.

In spite of this, the Council considered that it was of paramount importance that certain portions of the Scheme should be put in hand without delay, and accordingly resolutions were passed that the Ministry of Health should be approached for consent to proceed with certain portions in advance of the main scheme. These are :—

- (a) **Neen Savage.**—A tender has been accepted by the Council and the Ministry of Health have awarded a starting date, viz.:—1st July, 1949, for the laying of an 8-inch diameter spur from the Elan Aqueduct to Neen Savage School, together with certain lengths of 3-inch diameter main to the village of Neen Savage. In due course this 8-inch main will form one of the main feeders for the major scheme.
- (b) **Highley and Alveley.**—Owing to the repeated shortage of water in both parishes, the Council's Consulting Engineer has been instructed to prepare a scheme for the extension of an existing 4-inch diameter main, now terminating at Kinlet Park, to the villages of Highley and Alveley. This scheme is also intended to form part of the comprehensive scheme. It is expected that full details will be ready for submission to the Ministry of Health in January or February next.
- (c) **Astley Abbots.**—Having considered the situation in this parish the Council also gave instructions for a scheme to be prepared for extending the mains, now laid in Stanley Park, to Colemore Green, Astley Abbots and Cross Lane Head. For the time being water will be supplied by the Bridgnorth Corporation, but ultimately the extension will form part of the Low Level Scheme.

HIGHLEY.—Generally speaking the position is much the same as in 1947, excepting that at the end of October there remained in store sufficient water to last approximately fourteen days. This position arose owing to lack of rainfall for protracted periods during the summer months. Until a new supply is provided for this village, seasonal shortages are unavoidable and must be expected to occur each year during dry weather.

ALVELEY.—The new water supply scheme for this village has been completed during the year and a great improvement has been effected.

A tender has now been accepted for the relaying of most of the village mains, but it is not expected that work will commence until the middle of next year.

CLAVERLEY.—Main-laying was completed and the Scheme put into operation during January of this year. A long-felt need has now been met and to date 155 premises have taken piped supplies from the new mains.

WORFIELD.—The Council have requested the Wolverhampton Corporation's Water Undertaking to prepare a scheme for piping water to Worfield Village and Ackleton. Hitherto, water has been obtained from private supplies and wells, but these services have proved so unsatisfactory that it was considered necessary to provide a piped supply.

STOTTESDON.—As a result of a series of samples taken from the springs at the Hardwick source, the majority of which are unfit, the Council decided that chlorination was necessary. A scheme has been prepared and the necessary apparatus is now on order. The quantity of water available during the year has proved to be sufficient for the needs of the parish in spite of a greatly increased draw-off due to a marked rise in the quantity used by milk producers.

SUMMARY.

The past year has encouraged the hope that real progress may be made in the near future. The situation in the District, however, can by no means be regarded as even reasonably satisfactory, and the need for adequate water supplies is still most urgent in many areas, particularly the parishes of Highley and Alveley.

It cannot be too heavily stressed that lack of proper water supplies has delayed almost all development and practically precludes all possibility of building houses in water-less areas, although the need is pressing.

Statistics in respect of premises supplied with water from public piped supplies are detailed in the following table :—

Parish.	Premises Supplied		Increase	Per-centage of Parish.
	(1) Direct.	(2) By Standpipe Only.	since Dec. 1947.	
Alveley	30	96	16	43.5
Astley Abbotts	12	—	1	8.1
Highley	296	205	2	86.6
Kinlet :				
(b) Button Oak	24	2	—	25.7
(a) Meaton Lane ..	10	—	2	
Stottesdon	40	—	—	15.0
Tasley	35	—	2	71.4
Morville	7	—	7	6.8
Claverley	155	—	155	40.0
			<hr/>	
			185	

Those parts of the district which are not served by public supplies obtain their water either from public or private wells, and in some instances private piped supplies.

The number of premises so supplied will not be known until the Housing Survey is completed. This information should be available during 1949.

SAMPLING.

A grant-aided scheme is in force whereby samples of water collected from within the area of the County of Salop may be submitted to the County Analyst for analysis at a reduced fee of 3/- per sample.

Bacteriological samples taken from public supplies are analysed free of charge at the Donaldson-Hudson Laboratory, Shrewsbury.

The public supplies, other than the wells, have been sampled during the year. Samples are also taken at the request of individual owners.

A summary of the samples taken throughout the year is shown in the following table :—

PUBLIC SUPPLIES.

Location.	Source.	Fit.	Unfit.	Suspect.
Netchwood	Public Well ...	1	—	—
Middleton Scriven	Spring ...	—	1	—
Claverley	Public Well			
	Danford Lane ...	1	1	—
Neen Savage	School Pump ...	—	1	—
Stottesdon	Main Supply ...	1	1	1
Highley	Main Supply ...	1	—	—
Alveley	Main Supply ...	1	—	1

PRIVATE SUPPLIES.

Location.	Source.	Fit.	Unfit.	Suspect.
Lane Green Farm, Six Ashes	Well ...	—	1	—
Nethercote Cottage, Neen Savage	Well ...	—	—	1
Woodthorpe, Dowles Road, Bewdley	Well ...	1	—	—
Camping Site, Coppice Lodge, Kinlet	Well ...	1	—	—
Neenton Hall Farm	Spring ...	—	1	—

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

Highley still remains the only parish having a proper system of sewers and sewage disposal works, and even these are by no means either modern or efficient. The quantity of sewage which passes through the works fluctuates according to the weather, and there is no guarantee that the effluent is even reasonably good in time of storm. In addition, the works are constantly fouled by large quantities of grit and ashes washed down into the sewers from unsurfaced private streets, so that constant attention is necessary if the plant is to be expected to work at all.

The Council are fully alive to the necessity for new schemes in their area, and during the year instructions have been given for schemes to be prepared for the villages of Worfield and Alveley.

The details of the scheme for Claverley are nearing completion and it is expected that the matter will be considered by the Council early next year.

SCAVENGING.—House refuse is collected in the parish of Highley once each week. A horse and cart are used for this purpose and although reasonably efficient, should be replaced by a proper vehicle as soon as circumstances permit.

A fortnightly collection has been instituted in the parish of Alveley during the year. The collection is made by a Contractor who uses a motor lorry for the purpose.

A scheme for collecting refuse throughout the remainder of the district has been adopted by the Council. It is intended to visit the main centres of population and other premises situated along the various routes to be followed once each fortnight. A new 10 cubic yard scavenging lorry has been purchased and it is proposed to commence operating the scheme at an early date next year.

COLLECTION OF NIGHT SOIL.—The collection of night soil from the village of Highley is still undertaken by the Council. It is unlikely that any change can be made until the new water mains are laid.

SECTION "D."

HOUSING.

There has been an improvement in the rate of house building in the area. Since my last report, 22 houses have been completed and occupied and a further 70 are now under construction.

Details are as follows :—

	Under Construction.	Completed.
Alveley	—	16
Claverley	14	—
Hilton	6	—
Highley	50	—
Morville	—	6
	—	—
	70	22
	—	—

Private building has shown little progress, chiefly due to the ban on the issue of licences. Only five new houses have been completed by private persons, and the building of a further six houses has been specially authorised by the Ministry of Health.

Details are :—

	Under Construction.	Completed..
Alveley	4	—
Chetton	1	—
Eardington	—	1
Aston Eyre	—	2
Romsley	1	2
	—	—
	6	5
	—	—

All of these houses are for occupation by agricultural workers and in no case has any private individual been permitted to build.

No applications for grants under the Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1946, have been received.

SECTION "E."

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.

Number of Producers on the register	337
Accredited	16
Tuberculin Tested	27
Heat treatment plants	Nil
Number of inspections	58

Reports on Milk samples :—

Grade.	Results.
T.T. 57 samples	51 passed 6 failed.
Accredited 37 samples	29 passed 8 failed.
Ungraded 4 samples	3 passed 1 failed.
Heat treated —	— —

FOOD AND DRUGS (MILK & DAIRIES ACT), 1944.—This Act has not yet come into operation, so that the duties of Local Authorities have remained the same for this year.

ICE CREAM.

Number of ice cream manufacturers in the district ...	4
Number of samples taken for examination	Nil

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.—Slaughtering of animals except for casualties and pigs for private consumption continues to be carried out at the Wolverhampton Abattoir from which centre meat is distributed to Bridgnorth Borough and Rural District.

FOODSTUFFS CONDEMNED IN THE DISTRICT DURING 1948.

Potatoes, 11-cwt.	Tinned Milk, 6 tins.
Oranges, 180.	Tinned Pheasant, 1 tin.
Lemons, 68.	Tinned Tomatoes, 1 tin.
Stewed Steak, 1 tin.	Tinned Apples, 1 tin.
Luncheon Meat, 5 tins.	Tinned Sausage, 1 tin.
Danish Pork, 3 tins.	Tomato Juice, 1 tin.
Marinated Mussels, 11 tins.	

SECTION "F."

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Measles was prevalent throughout the area, principally in the latter half of the year. A majority of the cases occurred in Highley.

Whooping cough cases were notified in greater numbers than usual and were not confined to any one district.

There was only a small number of cases of scarlet fever.

One case of Enteric Fever (Paratyphoid) was notified and treated at Worcester. The source of infection was not discovered.

No cases of diphtheria were notified during the year.

The National Health Service Act which came into force on 5th July, 1948, transferred the responsibility for propaganda, keeping records and the immunisation of children from Rural and Urban local authorities to the County Councils.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR.

Disease,	Total Cases		Cases Admitted		Total Deaths			
	Notified.		to Hospital.					
	Civ.	Non-Civ.	Civ.	Non-Civ.				
Scarlet Fever	16	4	6	4	—	
Measles	236	—	1	—	1
Whooping Cough...	113	—	—	—	—	—
Enteric Fever (Paratyphoid)...	1	—	1	—	—	—
Pneumonia	7	14	—	14	—	5
Erysipelas	2	—	—	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	—	1	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever	—	1	—	1	—	—
Malaria (Permanent)	—	1	—	1	—	—

TUBERCULOSIS.

Notifications and Deaths from this disease showed a considerable increase over 1947.

NEW CASES OF MORTALITY DURING 1948.

Age Periods	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Resp.		Respiratory.		Non-Resp.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
15	4	2	—	1	—	1	—	—
25	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	1	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & upwards ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
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Total	12	4	—	3	*5	3	—	—
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(*Registrar-General).

I am indebted to Mr. Yelland, Bridgnorth Rural District Surveyor, for Sections C and D, and to Mr. Ingham, Rural District Sanitary Inspector, for Section E.

L. E. DICKSON, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health,

"Bridgnorth Journal" Co.

